

Sochacki Park
Public Prioritization
June 30: 7:30 PM
Golden Valley Rec Center

Agenda

1. Recap
 - a. Purpose/Goal of collaboration between TRPD, GV & Robbinsdale
 - To meet residents' needs for regional park services in the fully developed cities where Three Rivers has no regional parks.
 - b. April meeting: The Public vision for Sochacki.
 - Retain the wild character of the park while providing natural resource and water improvements, interpretation/recreation programming opportunities, and limited new or upgraded facilities.
2. Tonight's meeting:
 - a. General overview of natural resources and education/programming opportunities.
 - b. Overview of potential development opportunities.
 - c. **Tonight's Goal: Public prioritization of development opportunities in the park complex:**
 - Table exercise - Prioritizing development opportunities.
 1. Individual Prioritization: Read through the list of potential projects and rank them directly on the handout in order of priority.
 2. Preliminary Table Priorities: Discuss individual priority outcomes and work to build consensus on list of priorities as a table.

Using the priorities/development sheet – cut out each development opportunity your table would like to see implemented. Then arrange them in order on the blank handout, with the highest priority at the top of the handout, and the lowest at the bottom of the map. New ideas can also be added and prioritized.
 3. Table Reports: Each table shares their priorities and thinking behind their priorities, as well as any new ideas they want added to the map.
 4. Final Priorities: Each table has the opportunity to rearrange their priorities, then glues their final priorities in order of priority on the blank handout using a glue stick.
3. Wrap Up
 - a. Next steps
 - Develop the draft conceptual plan based on feedback this evening and further input from Park Boards.
 - Develop a Cooperative Agreement between the two cities and Three Rivers.

- Seek City and Three Rivers approval of the Agreement and conceptual plan.
- Begin implementation.

Natural Resources initiatives:

The primary natural resources goal identified by the public is to improve the water quality of the ponds within the park complex, and the water quality of Bassett Creek. The specific actions to achieve that goal need to be identified in partnership with the Bassett Creek Watershed Management Committee, and could involve actions such as water diversions, pond excavation, and construction of water retention structures.

The public likes the variety of wildlife within the park complex, and would like to see wildlife habitat improved and expanded. Three Rives Natural resources staff would work with Eagle Scouts and other volunteer and educational organizations to install wood duck houses, bat boxes, and establish pollinator gardens.

Large-scale vegetation management poses a difficult challenge within the park complex. The public has an interest in keeping the park complex "As is" but at the same time likes the idea of getting rid of invasive species. The majority of the park complex is a significantly disturbed site (it was a dumping ground for concrete and asphalt from Minneapolis street projects 50 years ago). The soils are poor and the majority of vegetation is buckthorn and other invasive species. Eradication would significantly alter the existing forest-atmosphere, and native species planting would be very difficult to maintain due to the poor soils. Consequently, Three Rivers Natural Resources staff recommends a focus on small scale interior projects such as the pollinator gardens, and pond-edge vegetation management.

Natural resources management costs for the above actions are expected to be minimal, given the idea of enlisting the aid of outside agencies and volunteers.

Programming Initiatives:

Three Rivers Education staff envisions on-site offerings centered around interpretation of how nature has reclaimed the disturbed site; and on the water resources in the park complex using the outdoor H2O classroom and trail system. Noble Elementary is a few blocks away from the park, and staff would work with teachers to develop an on-going nature education program that partners the school with the park complex for experiential learning opportunities.

Low impact and non-intrusive outdoor recreation programs such as geocaching, slack-lining, and shallow water exploration with kayaks would also be offered in the park complex.

Comment [GK1]: Not sure if this is feasible/good idea. Urban birding would be good in this park.